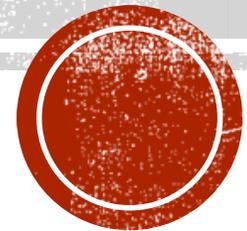


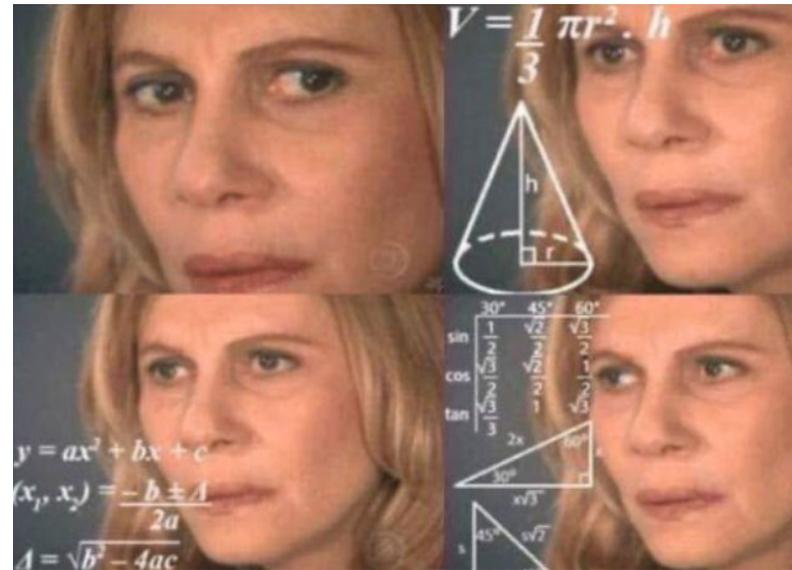
# MEMES AS DIGITAL GRAFFITI AND POLITICAL CARTOONS



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# WHAT IS A MEME?



# MEMES

- Memes are images, videos, and texts that are usually humorous and primarily shared on social media platforms

How Peter did my sweet Jesus....



# MEMES + LINGUISTICS

- We can think of memes as a linguistic tool
  - Shift notions around only engaging with standard english to acknowledging multiple englishes
- Used to engage with people and provide a space to share belief, ideas, and opinions



# MEMES ARE HIP HOP PEDAGOGY

- Rapping/emceeing
- Deejaying
- Breaking
- **Word Art**
- Beatboxing



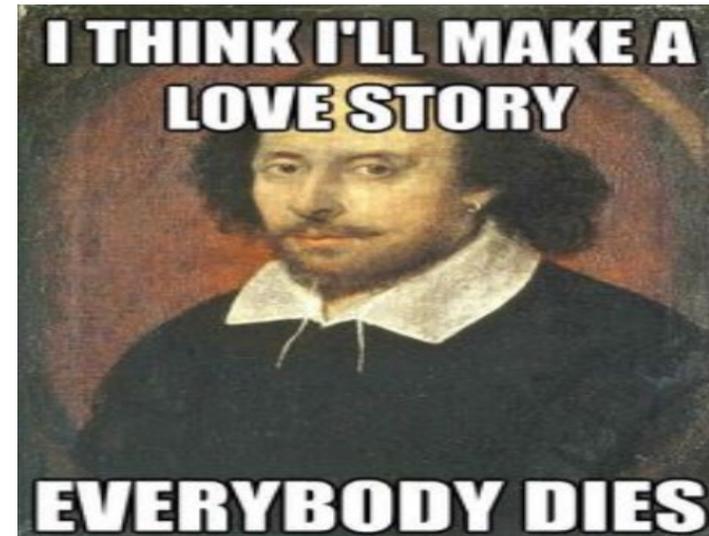
# GRAFFITI'S CONNECTION TO MEMES

- Graffiti is a form of hop-hop expression that is in the form of drawings, images, paintings on public property
- There are negative connotations that people associate with graffiti although it still expresses a particular message or story like a meme would



# WHY I AM INTERESTED IN THIS PARTICULAR RESEARCH

- As a future educator I recognize how young people are interacting with texts and concepts that are extremely important and influences how they view the world around them
  - Teaching memes is a way we can work to disrupt the literary canon
    - The literary canon is defined as texts that are viewed as traditional
      - Ex. Shakespeare



# EXAMPLE OF A TEXT SET

- A future lesson plan
  - To Kill A Mockingbird (novel in the literary canon)
  - The Hate You Give (contemporary text)
  - Preach by John Legend <https://youtu.be/k0r1AJMK79g?t=166>



# WHY I AM INTERESTED IN THIS PARTICULAR RESEARCH

- Black Twitter is enjoyed by many as are many things that African Americans have created/contributed to
  - Black Twitter is a word used to describe the collective identity of black users on Twitter. In a sense, Black Twitter is a digital community that allows people to connect and bond over what it means to be black. This includes both the lighthearted and grim aspects. The focus tend to be reflective of African American' experience, though not exclusively.
- Memes should be celebrated as a creative means and digital graffiti needs to be recognized as something that can be used to have important conversations



# WHY I AM INTERESTED IN THIS PARTICULAR RESEARCH

- The ability to comprehend and discuss memes is a form of literacy that not everyone has
  - We need to take time and celebrate this particular literacy as a skill
- Reimagining school structures... like standardized testing
- Students will continue processing with or without us



# TIME TO GET POLITICAL

- Many memes are in some way connected to politics
  - Race, gender, international relations, agency, privilege
- Why is this important to recognize?
  - I have heard people say “I don’t engage with politics because...”
    - We have to be willing to engage with these issues
    - These are important to be thinking about as we continue to encourage people to be active citizens and work towards a more inclusive society



# TIME TO GET POLITICAL

- Intentionality + awareness
  - Actively engage in memes and the world around you
  - See if you can recognize memes and how it intersects with politics
  - Be more conscious about what you post and think about how it could affect other's
    - Intent vs impact



# EXAMINING MEMES

- Memes can be used to make statements as well or deeper analyze specific topics
- This was a meme that was trending on twitter in response #METOO movement which was started by Tarana Burke



# EXAMINING MEMES

- Questions
  - What are your initial reactions to this meme?
  - Have you ever seen this meme in another context?



# EXAMINING MEMES

- Remember the twitter #ww3 that was trending on January 3rd
- These memes made us laugh in a moment where we tried to forget for a bit about our fears over a potential war with Iran due to the US ordering a drone strike that killed many including top Iranian military commander Qasem Soleimani



# EXAMINING MEMES

Me:  
2020 please  
be a good  
year!



3rd day at  
2020:  
[#WWIII](#)  
is trending

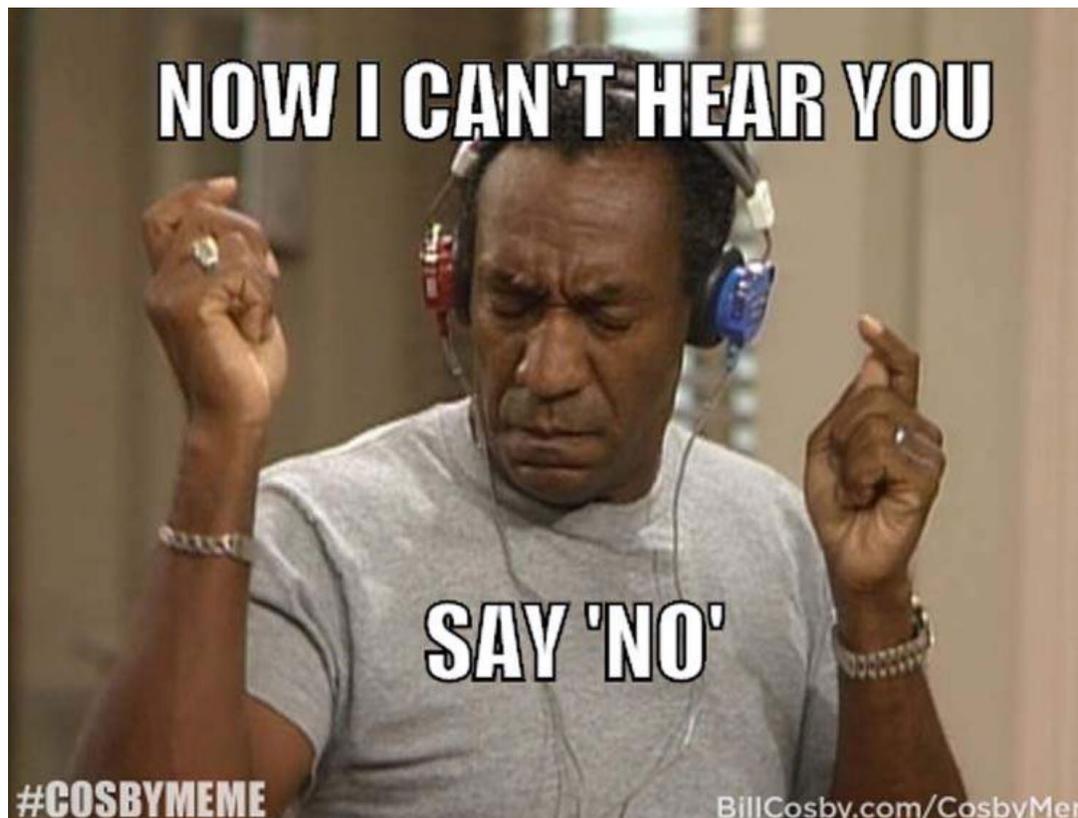
When you laugh at WW3 memes and then  
realize that you are a healthy 19 year old man



# EXAMINING MEMES

- In 2014, Bill Cosby's PR team created a meme generator on his website in hopes of spreading some positivity about him because he was making news headlines for being accused of sexual assault
- While there were some lighthearted memes created about his famous sweaters, majority of people created memes about the rape allegations he faced and the #CosbyMeme hashtag that his team started up ended up backfiring completely
- They removed the quickly the meme generator from the website, but the memes were still trending on social media
- <https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/2014/11/77656/bill-cosby-meme-backfire>

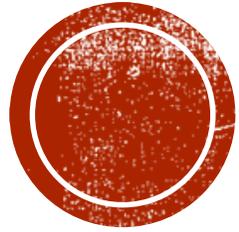




# TAKEAWAYS

- In our society (though my interest area focuses on African Americans) we make jokes about traumatic events, unfortunate situations
  - I am not here to argue that we necessarily stop, but rather we take the time to address the pain we are feeling... using humor to mask pain without debriefing or engaging in other forms of self care is unhealthy
- Memes can be used to teach informally and formally and should be embraced in classroom spaces
  - Validates student's knowledge and cultural awareness of what is popular in our society





**QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?  
THOUGHTS?**